

1940

EAST INDIAN SCULPTURE

DATING FROM THE FIRST CENTURY OF OUR
CHRISTIAN ERA TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY



THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY
TOLEDO, OHIO, U. S. A.

EAST INDIAN SCULPTURE
FROM VARIOUS AMERICAN COLLECTIONS

A SELECTION OF SCULPTURAL WORKS
BY UNKNOWN BUT OUTSTANDING
EAST INDIAN SCULPTORS SHOWN IN
GALLERY FIFTEEN FROM JANUARY
SEVEN TO JANUARY TWENTY-EIGHT
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY

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FOREWORD

Once a year the Department of Oriental Art of the Toledo Museum of Art has a major exhibition which has to do with the Arts of the Orient. This year the exhibition consists of East Indian sculpture. In American collections the arts of India are less prevalent than those from any other country in the Orient. True, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has acquired an outstanding number of very fine East Indian things, under the able direction of Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy; and The Metropolitan Museum, New York City, and the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery, Kansas City, also possess fine examples; but, generally speaking, East Indian material in American collections, particularly private ones, is noticeable by its absence. During the past year the Department of Oriental Art has given at the Museum an accredited course in conjunction with the University of Toledo, which has dwelt exclusively with the art and culture of India. It is, therefore, apropos that this annual exhibition should be one which presents the finest phase of India's artistic effort—East Indian sculpture.

Examples have been lent to us generously by THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO; THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM; THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART; THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, New York City; the MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, Boston, Massachusetts; the PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART, Kansas City, Missouri; MR. AND MRS. JAMES MARSHALL PLUMER, Ann Arbor, Michigan; also N. M. HEERAMANECK, New York City, D. G. KELEKIAN, New York City, H. KEVORKIAN, New York City, C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City, C. EDWARD WELLS, New York City.

AMERICAN MUSEUMS WHERE EAST INDIAN ART MAY BE STUDIED

ALBRIGHT ART GALLERY, Buffalo
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM
CITY ART MUSEUM, St. Louis
THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS
FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
FOGG ART MUSEUM, Harvard University
FREE ART GALLERY, Washington,
D. C.

LOS ANGELES MUSEUM OF HISTORY,
SCIENCE AND ART
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, New
York City
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, Boston
WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY
OF ART, Kansas City
NEWARK MUSEUM, Newark, N. J.
PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART
TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, Philadelphia



I HEAD FROM AN HEROIC STATUE OF THE BUDDHA; FROM MATHURA.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.). 11½ IN. H. YELLOW-SPOTTED RED SANDSTONE.

The yellow-spotted red sandstone out of which this primitive-like head was cut gives a peculiar surface aspect which is not altogether favorable. It was, however, an indigenous stone that was plentiful in and around the ancient city of Mathura, a city in north-central India which was a very active Buddhist centre at the beginning of our own Christian era. Statues cut in this yellow-spotted red sandstone prevailed in numbers at Mathura. They were a part of great Buddhist temples which were lavishly embellished by the art of the sculptor, but are now a mass of ruins. Many sculptural works at Mathura have been reported since early times; therefore, there must have been an extensive production of Buddhist sculpture there, indicating the existence of a great number of trained sculptors. As an art centre, this ancient city not only furnished many sculptural works for local consumption but also turned out others which were used in distant places. It was the mecca of the sculptor-artists of the time.

Unfortunately the nose and lips of this head have been injured, but most of the Buddhist sculpture in India has suffered likewise, due to the vandalism of invasions in Buddhist territories, particularly in the fourteenth century when an extensive campaign against all Buddhists took place. The abrasions on this head change the appearance of the sculpture very materially. But in the skilfully modelled cheeks and the cutting of the benign eyes and in the general skill with which the heroic proportions are maintained one can see that the carver was exceedingly skillful. The whole figure, of which only this head now remains, must have been imposing and very fine.

We notice the spiral curls which completely cover the head. We also notice the absence of the *ushnisha*, or the protuberance of the skull on the very crown of the head, a peculiarity of the Buddha. The *ushnisha* became the traditional treatment of the Buddha's head in all later sculptural works, and because of its absence here we naturally assign this head to an early date. Assignment to an early date is further supported by a comparison of the broad and stolid treatment of this head with similar characteristic qualities of many sculptural works of the preceding Sunga Period (200 B.C.-20 A.D.) and even of the Maurya Period (320-185 B.C.). The head is reminiscent of the earlier treatments but it visually represents the Buddha himself, whereas representation by symbol only was customary in the earlier epochs. Although the carving of the head suggests an advance toward more naturalistic depiction in the full-round than is seen in many of the relief-like figures of earlier times, there is, nevertheless, a lack of precision, especially at the back of the head, which leads one to consider this head a transition type and probably of the first century A. D. .

It was at Mathura that the Buddhist sculptors presented the figure of Buddha in the human form. Previously, the Buddha's chair, the Buddha's Wheel of the Law, or the bodhi tree under which he received Enlightenment were used as symbols to designate the presence of the Buddha.

Examples of Mathuran sculpture in museums and private collections are scarce; as a matter of fact, only in such museums as the ones at Calcutta and Lahore can this type of sculpture be seen to best advantage.

Lent by H. Kevorkian, New York City



2 FRAGMENT, ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT FROM A BUDDHIST STUPA.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.). 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. MARBLE.

Here we see a composite of six figures, two of which are placed prominently in the foreground, standing under the branches of the sacred bodhi tree. It is a Buddhist subject which no doubt refers to some tale regarding the life of Buddha, the exact allusion being unknown to the writer. The main figures, apparently a man and a woman, each seem to be carrying a bag or pouch and are decked with expensive jewelry—earrings and bracelets. Possibly they are of the laity and the donors of the monument of which this fragment was a part. Above these two figures are the heads and shoulders of four religioso, one of whom seems to be holding before him an open scroll, the attention of all four being centered upon some elevating religious sentiment.

The fragment was probably a part of a frieze on the exterior of a Buddhist building, because there still remains, at the top, a portion of a lintel-like member

defining a running course of decoration, the pattern of which is now indefinite, due to the badly worn condition of the stone.

The carving is typical of sculpture from Amaravati, a Buddhist centre in east-central India which was exceedingly active during the period to which this sculpture is assigned. During the last half of the second century A. D. many monuments were erected, all embellished with sculptural detail honoring and glorifying Buddha. Buddhist stupas, that is monumental reliquaries, were erected in great numbers. They were hemispherical domes raised on a terrace, or on a series of terraces, surrounded by stone railings. It was on these stone railings that the sculptor lavished his skill. His subject matter was the whole story of Buddha's existence, and so minutely did he set forth these stories on the stone railings that the pilgrim or devotee could have before him, as he circumambulated the stupa to gain merit, a pictorial story-book in plastic form. The surfaces of these stone railings were too obvious to the artist not to be made use of to glorify the Buddha and also to furnish a means by which to perpetrate and perpetuate his art. In relief such as the example before us the sculptor carved rapidly and freely the many episodes and legends connected with Buddha. Probably every sculptor, or at least the master-sculptor, could recite orally every one of the hundreds in vogue. Thus the sculptor worked spontaneously, interjecting his personal ideas of interpretation, never at a loss for subject matter.

The treatment of most of the Amaravati stone carvings was based upon a rather broad technique—that is, a massing of the component parts of the design, a rounding of the figures and the details, and, generally, the avoidance of sharply chiselled lines and edges. Sculptural examples from Amaravati are vastly important in considering the plastic art of India.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



3 PANEL FROM AN ARCHITECTURAL FRIEZE SCULPTURED IN RELIEF.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.). 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. GREY STONE.

This group of standing figures represents the birth of Buddha. Maha-Maya, the Queen-Mother of Buddha, stands in the center of the group, with the right arm raised to grasp the branch of a tree, and the left arm thrown over the shoulder of her sister, Prajapati, as the Hindu deity Brahma receives the babe on a "cloth of gold"; an attendant at the extreme right carries a palm-fan and a ewer; and a fifth figure standing with her back to the group seems to be grasping the blossom of a tree. Suspended in the trees are several objects, including the drum. At the right is a column, with a beautiful foliated capital upholding an architrave, a motif which was no doubt repeated at the opposite end of the scene to complete the panel.

As related in one of the Jataka Tales, or legends of the Buddha, the Mother of Buddha in journeying to her parents' home previous to the Buddha's birth, stopped at a beautiful pleasure park known as the Lumbini Grove. The trees with their prolific masses of fruits and flowers attracted her and under a monarch sal tree (*shorea robusta*) she was filled with a desire to grasp its branches, whereupon one branch miraculously bent down within her reach. Thus supporting herself, as shown here, she gave birth to the Child, who, springing from her right side without pain to her, was received on the golden net of Brahma. Immediately,

this newly born Child stood upon the ground, erect and strong, as represented in the panel by the small figure standing at the right-hand side of his mother, Maha-Maya. At the moment of his stepping upon the earth his divine character further asserted itself and "thousands of world-systems became visible to him like a single open space."

One of the Jataka Tales goes on to say that the Child was born with a bit of fine sandalwood in his hand, and upon being asked what it was he replied that it was "Herb-Medicine". This was taken and preserved and is reported to have become a drug which cured all ills. It was placed in a *chatty*, or earthenware water-pot; and at the extreme right one sees an attendant carrying such a water-pot, together with a fan which is also associated with the birth.

This particular example of sculpture is a fine specimen of Indo-Hellenistic art from Gandhara, a region in north-western India which was conquered and colonized by Alexander the Great in 326 B. C. The site is now in ruins, but has provided a prolific source from which examples of sculptural ornament such as this one have been secured. Reliefs of this character were applied to the exteriors of Buddhist buildings as architectural ornament.

The freedom of the sculptors was bound not only by the necessity of following closely the details of the stories they had to tell but also by the necessity of adhering strictly to certain religious formulas and conventions. Furthermore, if the sculptor was a native of India working under Hellenistic influence he was confused by an admixture of style which dulled his image; on the other hand, if the sculptor was a foreigner working with a religious subject new to him he was hampered by a lack of thorough understanding. Add to these factors the varying skills, or lack of skill, among the numerous workmen who produced the sculptured friezes of Gandhara, and we find more than adequate reason for the varying quality of Gandharan sculpture. Of course there were, among the Gandharan workmen, some who rose above the deterrent factors and produced sculptural work of fine quality. Of such was the sculptor of this panel.

Lent by the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois



4 PART OF AN ARCHITECTURAL FRIEZE FROM GANDHARA; A JATAKA TALE.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.) 10½ IN. H. GREY STONE.

The episode depicted here may be the one from the Jataka Tales, or stories of Buddha, which refers to Yasodhara, the young wife of the Buddha-prince, Siddhartha, visiting him after he had received Enlightenment and had become the Buddha. She brings his young son, Rahula, and asks the Buddha that the child's natural legacy be made over to him by the official act of the father, since the child was a prince and had need of the treasure.

The Buddha is shown seated upon his throne beneath the overhanging branches of a flowering tree. His right hand is raised in the *abhaya* mudra, a mystic gesture promising protection to devotees of the deity. His left arm rests upon the left thigh, the hand grasping the ends of the robe-drapery. The young mother is depicted at the right of the Buddha's throne, with the child upon her knee and an attendant making him comely for presentation to the Buddha. In the background are two other attendants, one of whom holds a water-jar for ablution.

But, when the request was made the Blessed One arose and walked away. The child followed him, saying, "Monk, give me my inheritance! Give me my

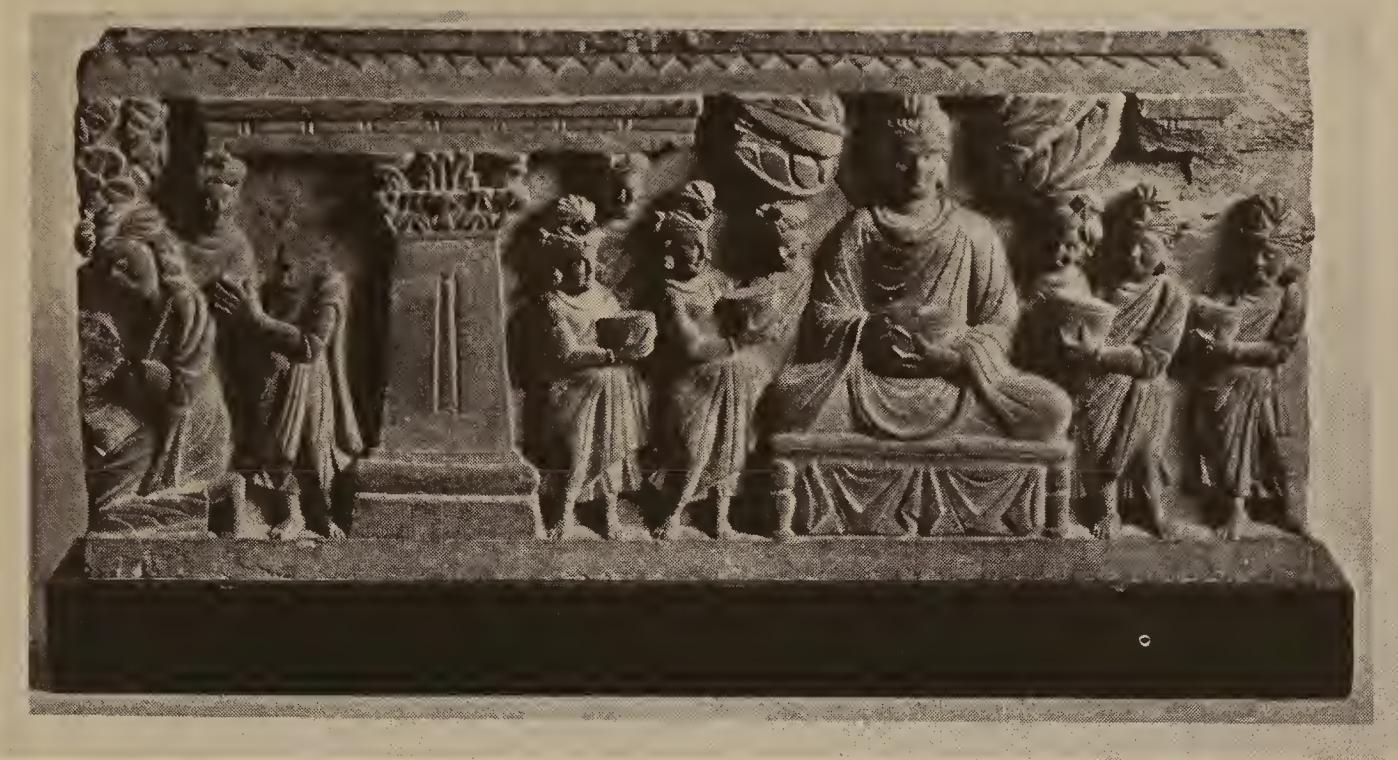
inheritance!" This second stage of the scene takes place at the right, where we see a small boy kneeling before a monk-like figure.

The story goes on to relate that the Blessed One refrained from transferring the property, saying, "This wealth perishes with the using and brings vexation with it! I will give him the seven-fold wealth which will make him the heir of spiritual inheritance!" The story is completed by the young son's joining the order and becoming a Buddhist monk.

A decorative motif incised around the upper member of the Buddha's throne suggests the story of the grass-cutter, Sotthiya, who presented to the Buddha, just before the time of his Great Enlightenment, eight bundles of grass, which the Buddha scattered upon the ground at the spot he had chosen. Immediately there appeared a seat "fourteen cubits long", and the blades of grass "arranged themselves in such a form as would be beyond the power of even the ablest painter or carver to design".

The Indo-Grecian aspect of this bas-relief is an interesting phase of art which developed in the hinterland of India where Alexander the Great colonized the Oriental region of Gandhara. Greek sculptors and Oriental sculptors combined their training and ideas, producing a localized hybrid phase of art which is decidedly Indo-Grecian. It is neither first-rate Grecian art, nor is it first-rate Oriental art; and yet it is an exceedingly interesting combination which has a provenance and style all its own. At best the Greek colony was a small one in the midst of an Oriental environment at a time when Buddhism was at its height in India, with the result that Buddhist episodes are prevalent in the art of the region, with very little Hellenistic subject-matter represented. Now and then, however, we see such very curious pictorial anomalies as the peace-loving Buddha with the trident of warlike Zeus in his hand. In the instance before us the subject-matter is Buddhist but the details, such as the treatment of the hair, the acanthus capital and the ornament on the architrave, as well as the general treatment, show Hellenistic influence.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



5 PANEL FROM GANDHARA; THE MIRACLE OF THE BEGGING BOWLS.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.). 9½ IN. H. GREY STONE.

The subject matter of this panel refers to an incident in the Jataka Tales, the so-called Buddhist Birth Stories which set forth the various experiences of the Buddha. The story of the begging bowls, as told by the chronicler, states that at one time Buddha found himself without a bowl in which to receive his food. The Guardians or Devas, of the four quarters of the sky, realizing that the Buddha never received food in his hands, hastened and brought four bowls made of jade. The Blessed One, out of kindness to each of the Guardians, accepted all of the bowls and said, "Let them become One". Thereupon the four bowls merged into one of medium size, looking like any other begging bowl except that around the mouth were visible four lines, the only evidence that this single bowl was once four bowls. Two wealthy merchants who were passing by were stopped by the Devas, who appealed to them to open their hearts and offer food to the Master. This the Master accepted in the miraculously formed bowl. The merchants were amazed and so impressed that they said, "Lord bestow upon us something to which we may pay reverence". The Buddha immediately plucked hairs from his head and gave them to the merchants. Subsequently the merchants built a great dagoba, or reliquary, in which were placed the sacred relics, and then became the professed disciples of Buddha.

Here we see the four Devas, the spirits from heaven, two at the right and two at the left of the seated Buddha. They are presenting the precious bowls, and the Buddha is holding in his hands the single bowl so miraculously formed,

with the four lines around the rim plainly visible. In the background are laymen, suggesting an audience or crowd which assembled when the Buddha performed the miracle. At the right and left of the Buddha's head are branches of the bodhi tree, the tree under which Buddha sat when he experienced the Great Enlightenment, and which is known as the sacred tree of Buddha. This slab is but a portion of a long frieze which ornamented the exterior of a Buddhist building in Gandhara, a Hellenistic colony site in the northwest.

At the left of the panel we see the beginning of another episode, but details are insufficient to define the story which it represents. Each scene was probably differentiated by pilasters similar to the one shown in this panel. These pilasters have elaborate foliated acanthus-like caps and in the center of the shaft a device which often appears on Gandharan slabs, the exact significance of which is unknown. It is presumed, however, that in some way it refers to earlier octagonal columns of Indian workmanship and is here merely used as a conventional ornament on the square shaft of the Corinthian column so obviously Hellenistic. The Hellenistic influence seen in this sculptured panel is typical of all sculptural work from Gandhara.

Such sculpture was used for religious purposes, according to the ancient practice of India, but in Gandhara, a Graeco-Roman outpost, as in India proper, it also became purely decorative, that is, became an unqualified architectural adjunct, was actually used for architectural ornament, rather than used in any religious way of major importance. Individual statues were carved, of course, but the mass of production was decorative, was a part of the architectural embellishment of a building—as was the object before us.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



6 SEATED BUDDHA WITH TWO ATTENDANT BODHISATTVAS, FROM HADDA.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A. D.) 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. STUCCO.

Stucco, often used as a plastic material in the Orient, particularly in Afghanistan, the region from which this example came, was quite durable and convenient for the purpose of sculptural ornamentation. Even large figures were fashioned in this material but architectural detail, on a smaller scale, was universally used in the absence of stone. Workmen readily modeled figures and geometric motifs in this soft plastic material which, when dry, hardened sufficiently to be practical and fairly permanent even though unbaked by fire—the hot sun of the region, acting as the drying element, being sufficient.

This small, delightful architectural piece, though some seventeen hundred years old, has suffered comparatively little on the edges or otherwise, so far as the actual modelling is concerned, quite conclusively demonstrating its durability.

The subject is the Seated Buddha, in the attitude of meditation, with downcast eyes and the palm of one hand resting in the palm of the other, the legs crossed with the soles of the feet uppermost.

Here we find the Buddha completely clothed in a toga-like garment the folds

of which add considerably to the decorative quality of the modelling. In a more Indian-like depiction of the Buddha we would find the clothing thrown over the left shoulder and the right breast completely bare. In this particular, therefore, we are aware of a Hellenistic convention appearing in the detail which very naturally occurs in this locale, so thoroughly Hellenized by Greco-Roman invasion and occupation.

Beside the Buddha stands a figure in the attitude of adoration. Its "queenly" aspect would lead one to suppose it was a Bodhisattva, or major Buddhist Saint. Further back in the composition is another standing figure but the head and hands are gone and the attributes thereof are unknown. Perhaps it is merely an attendant, or introduced merely to suggest the laity adoring the Buddha.

Bits of vermilion color are still visible on the upper right corner and over other parts of the background. 'Tis likely that the whole background was thus brilliantly colored.

The fragment has a decided charm and though small is a very good example of the Greco-Roman influence which prevailed in Buddhist art throughout this region and those bordering the great trade routes between the Levant and the Far East. Hadda, from whence this item is reported to have come, was a flourishing Buddhist center in Afghanistan during the early centuries of our Christian era, probably reaching its peak of activity in the Second Century A. D. It lay directly in the path of travel from northern India overland to both the Near East and the Far East. In much of the extant art from Hadda we see an intermingling of elements from Indian culture and Hellenistic and Iranian culture, as well as that of Central Asia and Mongolia.

Lent by Mrs. James Marshall Plumer, Ann Arbor, Michigan



7 FRAGMENTARY BUST OF A YAKSI, OR EARTH-BORN SPRITE.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.) 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ IN. H. SANDSTONE.

This fragment is interesting as obviously it was intended to be seen on both sides, since on the back is carved, in very low relief, a lotus motif. The motif is a composite of a lotus, seen side view, and what appears to be a lotus leaf, together with a stalk motif, all partially enclosed in a double-ridged circle. The stone is so fragmentary, however, that it is difficult to see the design clearly.

Enough of this fragmentary statuette remains to show that the figure carried over the right shoulder a fly whisk (*cauri*). This and the fact that it is a female figure would lead one to call it a Yaksi, or earthborn nature sprite. The Yaksis have the alluring beauty of forest-born creatures, often seductive in appearance, one reason, perhaps, why sculptured figures of this type are sometimes referred to as dancing girls. They are never shown in dancing poses, however. Inasmuch as this Yaksi is carrying a *cauri*, the fly-whisk which attendants wield when attending major personages, it is possible that the little figure was a part of a relief wherein a royal person was present. One such instance is known among

the sculptured reliefs from Mathura, and, without a doubt, this example came from Mathura. It is the same spotted red sandstone out of which all stonework from this site was fashioned. The headdress is elaborate and somewhat unusual, perhaps in this particular the result of the spontaneity of the carver, not too concerned with traditional convention. In her ear-lobes the sprite wears ear-plugs, the traditional form of earring for women.

If one were dealing with Buddhist art, instead of Hindu art, the figure would suggest a Bodhisattva rather than a Yaksi, but, the Hindu Yaksis often suggest the Buddhist Bodhisattvas, as in this case; that is, they are the full-bodied feminine type, graceful and often with an attentive attitude like that of the perfect servant.

Iconographically the Yaksis are associated with trees, tree spirits, perhaps, and may be thought of as the energizing symbol of nature's fertility. Their graceful characteristic may have suggested to the carver of architectural ornament the perfect adaptability of the figure to corbel and bracket forms. In any event, they are sometimes used for such a purpose. With one arm thrown over the head and the other bracing the body the figure makes a perfect arrangement in such a case. As a matter of fact the carving on the back of this fragment, as if the stone were to be seen from both sides, leads one to imagine that here we have the fragment of a corbel or bracket from one of the many ruined temples of old Mathura.

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. James Marshall Plumer, Ann Arbor, Michigan

8

FRAGMENTARY BUST OF A YAKSI, OR EARTH-BORN SPRITE.
KUSANA PERIOD (50-320 A.D.).

8 IN. H.

SANDSTONE.

A fine example of Mathura sculpture, similar to the above.

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. James Marshall Plumer, Ann Arbor, Michigan



9 HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA, OR BUDDHIST SAINT, FROM HADDA.
VTH CENTURY. 8½ IN. H. STUCCO.

This small head is modeled with simplicity itself as the guiding genius. With the fewest number of strokes the features have been fashioned. Only the hair is treated with any degree of elaboration and that only slightly. It suggests the Greek type of woman, as would naturally be the case coming as it does from Hadda in Afghanistan, an ancient city on the great trade route from Hellenistic points to the Middle and Far East. Greeks, the insatiable travelers, if not the conquerors, occupied this region, which perhaps reached its peak of activities about the 2nd Century A. D. At Hadda, therefore, an admixture of Greek and Oriental influences determined the local style of art, and this head is typical of the result. The region was decidedly Buddhist and sculptural remains are universally of Buddhist significance whether fashioned in Hellenistic style or otherwise. The case in hand is apropos. We have, without a doubt, the head of a

Buddhist figure, a Bodhisattva, or Buddhist Saint, but very much simplified and somewhat humanized. The general feeling is one of divine calm, remote and meditative. On the forehead is the *urna*, or “third eye”, symbolizing divine wisdom and power through spiritual insight. The long ear-lobes which in Buddhist art also represent wisdom and insight are present. But in the actual modeling of the features—in the lips and chin and nostrils—and in the hair, and even in the fillet or cap worn over the hair, there is a human naturalism which makes this head seem less unfamiliar and less exotic to Occidentals than do many of the Buddhist figures of India proper. It is due, of course, to the superimposing, here at Hadda, of Hellenistic humanism upon the Buddhist idea.

At present there is a coating of dark buff clay all over the head, due to the indigenous earth from which it was excavated, parts of which still adhere thickly in the interstices of the ears, hair, et cetera.

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. James Marshall Plumer, Ann Arbor, Michigan



10 TORSO FROM A STATUE OF A BODHISATTVA, OR BUDDHIST SAINT.
GUPTA PERIOD (320-600 A. D.) 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. RED SANDSTONE.

It is unfortunate that this fragment is all that is left of what was originally a superb piece of East Indian sculpture. Enough remains, however, to fully impress the observer with its importance. At the back is the evidence which shows that it was ruthlessly split off from the stone of which it was a part. It is a relief, but so deeply were the rounded forms of the figure cut by the carver that it has the appearance of a statue in full round.

With the head and limbs missing it is difficult to make any definite assignment as to the deity represented, but it probably is a Bodhisattva, one of the various Buddhist saints of exalted position in the Buddhist pantheon. The red sandstone material, the sculptural style, and such interesting details as the elbows away from the body, the accentuated breasts, the broad, rounded shoulders and the robustness of the body point rather definitely to the theory that it must have

been made at Mathura, an ancient Indian city in northern India and an extraordinarily active Buddhist center during the beginning of the Christian era. Stylistically the torso may be assigned to the Gupta Period (320-600 A. D.), a very important period in the history of East Indian art which is often referred to as the Golden Age. It would seem, however, to be an example of sculptural work of the early years of that period. Notwithstanding the mutilation of the statue that which remains instantly appeals to our sense of appreciation. The torso has been cut with skill and with feeling; the ornaments, which are still intact, are delightfully carved with spontaneity and smartness and thus appropriately deck the fine figure. Around the throat are several necklaces. One is obviously a string of pearls, with a long bead in the center; another represents a braided gold rope; and the third is a piece of pendant jewelry which suggests a gem-set scroll-piece suspended from the neck by a gold chain having a feather motif. Armlets and bracelets are present; and the lower parts of elaborate earrings still remain. The heavy folds of flesh at the neck, "like the lines of a conch shell", occur frequently in Indian art, being considered one of the bodily "marks of beauty." Over the left shoulder is a heavily braided cord extending across the chest and under the right arm with the knot of the cord just above the left nipple and the two tasseled ends hanging down at the side. This cord is the *yajnopavita*, which designates those who are spiritually twice-born. On the arms and wrists are fine ornaments—very expensive-appearing ones. Twisted around the left arm are the draped folds of a light garment; but the torso is completely undraped. The left hand appears to be grasping the upturned ends of more drapery. The right hand is missing but it was obviously raised, with the palm out, perhaps in the *abhaya mudra*, a mystic position of the hands signifying protection to the devotee and often referred to as the *mudra* of fearlessness. Between the thumb and forefinger a ridge is visible which may be the lower stem of a lotus blossom which, in that case, was originally carried by the deity.

Splendid examples of this period are scarce in American collections.

Lent by The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois



II SMALL HEAD, CUT AWAY FROM THE FACADE OF A HINDU TEMPLE.
GUPTA PERIOD (320-600 A. D.), 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ IN. H. RED SANDSTONE.

This red-sandstone head, small in size, was originally a part of the sculptural decoration, elaborate ornament in relief, often seen completely covering the exteriors of temples in India. It was an integral part of the wall of a building, which, no doubt, was, as usual, covered with innumerable other carved heads and figures. The flat chiseled surface at the back of this head shows where it was cut away from the original block, perhaps by some one who desired it as a specimen of East Indian sculpture. More likely, however, it was merely a part of a ruined temple that had been cast down either by ruthless vandalism or decay, as is the case in regard to so many of the Hindu temple monuments of the period.

The stone carver's device, to bring out what appears to be a full-view, is to be noticed. It is really a three-quarter view only, with a full-view effect, the last quarter being absorbed by the stone block, of which the head was a part. The

hair is ingeniously treated. From a center parting it is combed to the right and left in a graceful curve ending in an ear-length bob; short bangs are parted in the center and curve about an ornament which graces the upper forehead. The rest of the hair is caught up in a chignon placed well over the right ear and encircled by a decorated band to which the forehead ornament is attached. This treatment of the hair gives a refinement to the small and delicate features, carved so humanly with pursed mouth and partly closed eyes. With merely the head before one it is not easy to attribute a name to this interesting figure. It may be the head of a Yaksi, a genii of mysterious heavenly beauty; or possibly it is a vrksaka, a dryad; or even a dancing girl—all, among many others, often used as sculptured motifs on Hindu temples.

The manner of fashioning the eyes and eyebrows is interesting, the effect which the sculptor achieved being both naturalistic and decorative, with modeling indicating the upper and lower eyelids and rounded eyeballs, and arched eyebrow ridges coming to a "V" over the nose.

The material is yellow-spotted red sandstone like that which is found in and around the city of Mathura, an especially active art center in the first centuries of our era. Comparatively few examples of this period are in American collections, and each year it becomes more and more difficult to acquire them; therefore, although this miniature head is not a great piece of sculpture, it is rather significant as a typical specimen of East Indian work of the Gupta period.

Lent Anonymously

(Collection of T. H. D. Marquand)



12 STANDING FIGURE OF THE HINDU DEITY VISHNU, THE PRESERVER.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, VIITH CENTURY A. D. 36 IN. H. BLACK STONE.

This impressive statue, in sober blackish stone, has been called the image of Surya, a sun-god, but later attributions have referred to it as a statue of Vishnu. The convincing attributes of Vishnu, such as the discus, and the conch shell, are missing; and the figure is only two-armed, instead of four-armed as is more generally the case. However, both Surya and Vishnu are associated with the Sun, the former controlling the sun-rise and the latter controlling the sun at midday. Be it Surya or Vishnu, this figure is a splendid example of East Indian sculpture from the early years of the Mediaeval Period, perhaps as early as the seventh century A. D. As a matter of fact, the figure is known to have come from Aphysad, Bihar, in northern India, a locality where it was seen *in situ* before being brought to America, and known as Vishnu. It is somewhat mutilated, with the arms and legs broken off, and abrasions at the nose and lips, yet the very erect, somewhat youthful but manly figure is instantly inspiring. The god wears a jeweled

band on the forehead, and around the crown are arched motifs, the detail of which suggests spurts of flame. The flattened top of the crown bears a circular motif which has been called the wheel, an attribute associated with Vishnu; but it very definitely has the appearance of a circular lotus motif, the petals being obviously shaped like those of the lotus and the center also being in keeping with the character of the lotus flower.

From under the high circular crown spring masses of curls which fall about the shoulders. Shorter ringlets are shown in a regular arrangement across the forehead. This treatment of the hair is particularly delightful in its naturalism and, being also conventionalized, is the kind of thing that only a master-carver accomplishes successfully. Around the neck there is a necklace of what appear to be large pearls, the central ornament of which has been damaged. The torso is bare except for the twice-born thread (*yajnopavita*). Around the hips is represented a rich belt set with cabochon-cut jewels, with a beautiful center clasp. Hanging from the belt is a chain, probably representing a gold one, and down the left side a bejeweled chatelaine pendant. Formal folds about the hips and legs denote the presence of a transparent *dhoti*, or lower garment.

The god originally stood straight-legged on a stone pedestal, not with slightly bent knees as is so often the case with East Indian sculpture. The arms, now broken off, were probably bent at the elbow and each hand no doubt held an attribute of the deity. Particularly noticeable are the clear-cut stylish details of this figure in which there is a blending of naturalistic feeling and decorative quality that harmonize to make a finished sculptural effect. This figure, in spite of its mutilations, is outstanding in the range of East Indian sculpture. Strictly imposed conventions and iconographic attributes are so common in connection with East Indian sculpture that this straightforward single figure seemingly carved without too obviously imposed conventions appeals to us at once.

Lent by N. M. Heeramanneck, New York City



13 STELE IN RELIEF; DEPICTING THE MARRIAGE OF SIVA AND PARVATI.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, VII-VIIITH CENTURY A.D. 24^{3/4} IN. H. STONE.

The great god Siva stands with one hand on hip, and his left knee thrown slightly forward in what is called the swaying pose. Four-armed, the god holds in the upper left hand the flame, symbolizing the fire of sacrifice, in the upper right hand a trident form. With his lower right hand he clasps one of the hands of Parvati with an easy and graceful gesture. He wears his usual high crown or headdress. The torso is bare, with the exception of the sacred cord worn over the left shoulder and across the chest. This cord, which is generally a coil of three threads, commonly called *yajnopavita*, is always worn over the left shoulder and allowed to hang down across the body to the right hip. The wearing of it by certain classes is a mark of their second spiritual birth.

As usual, Siva is bedecked with jewelry: necklace, armlets and bracelets. Around the waist is a *dhoti* falling about the knee line, with folds and pattern

suggested by the carving. Parvati, the feminine counterpart or female energy of the god, stands gracefully at the right. She also has the pose of a queenly figure, the braced shoulders, tilted head, and type of headdress adding greatly to this characteristic.

Around the two figures are grouped many smaller figures, who, it is presumed, have come to witness the heavenly marriage. An exact statement regarding their identification is not easy, but Alvan C. Eastman, in Parnassus for February, 1933, has attempted one. He writes as follows: "Uppermost are two Gandharvas floating on clouds and bearing a jewelled crown between them which they hold over the deities. Below these, on opposite sides, are Indra, carrying his thunderbolt (vajra) and riding on the elephant, Airavata, and Brahma, much damaged, riding on his swan (hamsa) vehicle. Below these are two unidentified male figures, beneath whom again are two pairs of worshippers with offerings. At base level, between the two principal figures and in front of the head of the bull Nandi is the six-headed Karttikeya or Skanda, the God of War, Son of Siva and Parvati, riding on his peacock vehicle, of which only the head is seen. On the left is the other son of Siva and Parvati, the elephant-headed deity Ganesa, holding the axe (parasu) in his right hand, and tusk in his left. Ganesa is the remover of obstacles, the deity of good omen. On the right is a bearded sage, probably the Rishi Bhrigu."

Although the carving is broad in treatment and the stone has weathered, and thus increased the effect of this breadth of treatment, the two main figures in their naturalness give to this stele an artistic importance which cannot be missed. Iconographically it is also important, carrying as it does so many related figures.

Lent by C. Edward Wells, New York City



14 CAST OF A PANEL FROM THE TOP ROW OF RELIEFS IN THE FIRST GALLERY AT THE FAMOUS STUPA-TEMPLE, BOROBUDUR. DATE OF ORIGINAL, ABOUT 700 A.D. PLASTER CAST, 32 IN. HIGH.

In the small island of Java there is one of the greatest Buddhist temple-monuments ever built which is also one of the greatest architectural monuments in the world. Its exterior is terraced, one tier of stone after another, to a great height, and on the walls around the terraces is carved in relief the continuous story of the lives of the Buddha. In size of building and mass of sculpture it is spectacular and unique, and from an artistic point of view the pile and the sculpture which adorns it are of a very high order. This plaster cast is of one of the most impressive of the great panels which flank the terraces of Borobudur. The subject matter refers to an early episode in the life of Buddha just at the time when he decides upon the great Renunciation, while still a Bodhisattva, or Buddhist saint—that is, before he had obtained Buddhahood. We see him standing on a lotus, dressed in the magnificent costume which befitted a young prince who, upon his father's death, might inherit the kingdom and great wealth. He is bidding farewell to his charioteer and his faithful steed, in the presence of an escort of gods who stand in a worshipful group at the right. The story relates, at this point, that he has already ridden on the back of his charger, Kanthaka, beyond three kingdoms and had arrived, at the end of thirty leagues, at the bank of a river called Anoma. Dismounting he spoke to his servant, saying, "Good Channa, do thou now go back, taking my ornaments and my (horse) Kanthaka. I am going to leave the world."

At the left we see Channa, the courtier-charioteer, returning to the palace with Kanthaka, and Kanthaka looking back at the Bodhisattva reluctant to leave his master. The story continues, "And Kanthaka was unable to bear his grief,

and going out of their sight he died of a broken heart, but was reborn as a *Deva* with the name of Kanthaka."

In the scene before us we see Cakra sitting at the feet of Prince Siddartha holding the umbrella, symbol of royalty. At the left is the bodhi tree under which Siddartha finally received Enlightenment and became the Buddha; and under the tree Brahma, the great god of the Hindus, also pays homage, on bended knees. In the text of the canonical work, the Lalita Vistara, it is reported that at this time Prince Siddhartha was attended by an escort of gods (the group of figures seen at the left of the Prince), and guardians or Yaksas (the three figures at the extreme right). This plaster cast, directly from the original stone carving at Borobudur, gives us a very good idea of the sculptural beauty of that great monument. The Prince, standing on the lotus, is beautifully conceived, and the group of gods, in their interesting postures, and the figure of Channa, the Prince's servant, are handled in a masterly way. Over three miles of sculpture of this character embellish this famous temple of Borobudur. The host of sculptors who worked at Borobudur must have been considered to have acquired much merit in the Buddhist hereafter because of their work in producing this great example of the Jataka Tales, or the story of the Life of the Buddha.

Lent by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts



15 STELE OF A SEATED TARA; EMBODIMENT OF DIVINE MOTHERHOOD.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, IXTH CENTURY A. D. 34 IN. H. BLACK STONE.

This figure, as presented by the imager, is obviously a female deity, and yet the deities of East Indian Buddhism are sexless. Oftentimes, however, they are depicted with certain attributes which make them dual in character, or androgynous. The difficulty of portraying the dual form of the two sexes would readily be recognized by a sculptor when trying to create a single figure of artistic merit. Very ingeniously, therefore, he ordinarily solved the matter, when the need arose, by placing a woman's earring in the one ear and a man's earring in the other, as was done in this case. In the right ear is the plug-like earring worn by women. In the left ear (the lobe of which is broken) there was a pendant earring of the type worn by men. Iconographically, in this particular figure the Tara is conceded to be a female deity; in fact referred to as the Savioress, and Divine Mother. Full-busted and of sturdy mien she sits upon a lotus throne, the left leg bent

at the knee in the East Indian position of ease, and the right leg pendant with the right foot resting upon the "lotus throne of the world." Her right hand is placed on her knee with the palm outward. This is the *mudra*, or magic gesticulation, known as the gesture of charity. In her left hand she clasps the stem of a blue lotus which is shown in profile at shoulder height. The blue lotus attribute connects the Tara directly with the great Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, whose feminine energy she represents.

Above the seated figure and carved almost in the round are two miniature Buddhas on lotus pedestals; and also two lines of incised inscription, the translation of which is unavailable. It has been suggested that this inscription is a dedicatory one; it is completed on the base of the pedestal at the left. Under the lotus pedestal on which the Tara is seated are two lions, who appear to support it, and a miniature figure close to the pendant foot, which may represent the donor of the stele, a devotee of the goddess who, from under the throne, looks up at her in ardent admiration. Incorporated into one side of the throne-like pedestal is a *Deva*-like figure, four-armed, militantly bearing a sword suggesting, perhaps, Buddhism militant, guarding its tenets from all encroachments.

Around the Tara's neck is a three-strand necklace. She has beautiful armlets, heavy wire bracelets, and jeweled anklets. She wears a transparent *sari*, with a beautiful pattern suggested. This garment is caught at the waist with an elaborate belt, the buckle of which is a cabochon-decorated ornament. One end of the *sari* crosses the breasts and is thrown in a graceful loop over the left shoulder. The hair is beautifully suggested, piled in a coiled chignon which is secured by a jeweled fillet having an elaborate cabochon ornament in the front from which hangs a forehead ornament.

This stele or memorial slab, has a background which is appropriately decorated with a border based upon a delightful lotus motif.

Lent by N. M. Heeramanek, New York City



16 STATUETTE OF A SEATED BODHISATTVA, OR BUDDHIST SAINT.
NEPALESE, IXTH CENTURY. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. COPPER, FIRE-GILT.

The graceful pose of this little figure commends it at once. Though small, the figure is heavy, being a solid piece of copper casting. Originally it was covered with gold, by the so-called fire-gilt process, a process whereby amalgam of gold and mercury is washed onto a metal base; heat and burnishing, and the final elimination of the mercury, producing a perfect gold surface.

The posture, with the right knee raised, in the attitude of royal ease, and the right hand resting thereon, together with the general aspect of the figure, might suggest Avalokitesvara, the major Buddhist deity of Compassion. But the principal attribute of Avalokitesvara is missing—that is, a miniature image of the Amida Buddha in the crown—and one is thus led to presume that this figure may be not Avalokitesvara but one of the Taras, who represent the feminine energy of Avalokitesvara. It may be the Yellow Tara. The deity holds in her right hand the stem of a lotus, the bloom and bud of which appear at her right shoulder. In her left hand she holds the stem of another lotus blossom on which there is a miniature *vajra*, or pointed symbol of indestructibility. The lotus-

bloom at the Tara's right shoulder has the usual eight petals, forming a rosette around the central portion. That at her left shoulder, however, has a decorative quatrefoil backing which suggests sepals spread out to form a squared motif. The Taras, five of whom are generally noted—the Yellow, White, Green, Blue and Red—are all associated with Avalokitesvara and the fact that this is a Nepalese statue may also account for the close resemblance which it bears to the appearance of the greater deity. The downward-looking eyes suggest the sublimated compassion which is one of the characteristics of the Taras but is also the great attribute of Avalokitesvara, who is called "the one who looks down"; she refusing Nirvana, or the Buddhist Heaven, until all mankind has been saved.

The Taras are often shown with gem-like embellishments, in this case a small ruby in the crown and an emerald in the necklace. It is also quite possible that gems were originally set in the earrings. An arch-like halo rises from the shoulders, curving forward at the top toward the peak of the tiara, to the back of which it is joined.

The figure seems to be unclothed, but incised lines curving about each knee suggest the folds of some thin, clinging garment not otherwise noticeable. Tenuous scarf-like draperies fall from the girdle, spreading out, fan-like, beneath the feet and forming decorative fin-like attachments down the outsides of the thighs and around the curves of the bended knees. On the sole of the right foot there appears an interesting symbol or character, the significance of which has not been ascertained.

This statuette was apparently intended as a part of something larger, as there is a metal dowel-piece on the base showing that it was set into some horizontal surface. Perhaps this figure was one of the attendants accompanying a larger statuette of Avalokitesvara.

Lent by The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York



17 SEATED FIGURE OF THE BUDDHA WITH TWO ATTENDANTS.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, IX-XTH CENTURY A.D. 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. STONE.

This important example of East Indian sculpture represents the Buddha seated on the lotus throne with one hand, palm upward, in the lap and the other reaching down to touch the throne seat. The last is known as the *mudra*, or mystical gesture, canonized as "calling the earth to witness", signifying that the Gautama Buddha has the right to occupy the lotus throne of wisdom over all others. The Buddha has been carved in a naturally conventional or traditional way with the rows of curls over the head and the *ushnisa*, or protuberance, at the crown. He wears a monk's robe over the left shoulder with the right breast bare, the drape or folds being more or less stylistically cut with regularity but with telling effect. At the right and left of the Buddha are standing Bodhisattvas. The one at the Buddha's right hand is Avalokitesvara, the compassionate Bodhisattva, and the one at the left may be Vajrapani, thus making a triad with the Buddha, which is particularly found in connection with northern Buddhism. It

is to be noticed that the second figure once had a lotus stalk held in the left hand although now it is almost undetectable; this might refute a Vajrapani attribution.

The lotus seat is the symbol of miraculous birth and divinity, or purity. Seven of the upper petals of the lotus throne of this stele are inscribed in Sanskrit with what is very likely an abbreviated Buddhist creed of some sort. Below the lotus seat is a basement member decorated with two lions addorsed, signifying that this Buddha was the lion of the Sakya Clan, or the Buddha above all Buddhas.

Two kneeling figures, a man and a woman, appear in the center of the basement member; perhaps they are the donors who presented this splendid stele to the temple where it originally reposed.

The stele both as a whole and in each individual part of its detail is expressive of the sculptor's sense of decorative effect, as well as his delight in harmoniously planned and skillfully cut design. Even the nature of the stone itself, black and somewhat glossy, adds to the general decorative aspect of this sculpture.

The top of the stele is broken off but originally it had a beautifully executed halo of decorated concentric ridges forming, no doubt, a slightly flaring nimbus as is typical of this type of sculpture from Bihar, which it is assumed may be the locale of this particular piece of sculpture.

Lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City



18 STATUE OF A MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURE, PERHAPS THAT OF A YAKSI.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, XII-XIVTH CENTURY A.D. 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. MARBLE.

This example, which so clearly expresses sculptural line and rhythm, equals all others under observation. The figure in its unfamiliar pose, with the right hip elevated to the point of exaggeration and the rest of the torso thrown to the extreme left in consequence, is a masterpiece of handling. The craftsman's problem was to create what was known to him as the "swaying" motif, a traditional one in India, in connection with figure sculpture. Furthermore, he was creating the figure for a definite purpose, that is, architectural ornament. His idea was to produce an effective, lively composition, deeply cut (just less than the full round) to accent shadows, so necessary in the white marble medium at his command. In these particulars this example is typical of the style of architectural ornament seen on Hindu temples, especially when the craftsman wished to produce the effect of a supporting element though not necessarily a load-bearing member. His concern was to produce a visual effect but in so doing he added to the struc-

tural effect as well, especially so when the whole temple was enveloped in a maze of architectural ornament as was often the case. The left arm of the figure, now missing, was thrown over the head to convey the meaning of a supporting element and the raised right arm and hand add to the suggestion. The sway of the body is superbly exaggerated without throwing the vertical axis off balance. In effect it is not unlike the studied pose of an aesthetic dancer, but it is not the figure of a dancer. It is more likely the representation of a wood nymph or sprite, known in Hindu mythology as a Yaksi. Here we see at the right side a broken tendril which seems further to support this idea.

The appearance of Yaksis, or Yaksinis, in East Indian sculptural art must have had some propitious signification, since they represent a minor nature-deity or nature-spirit, suggesting Nature's fertility. Usually associated with trees, as a kind of dryad, they were often included as an essential part of decorative bracket forms, as on the gateways at Sanchi, where the Yaksi's body leans out at an angle, bracing itself by throwing one foot behind the other and grasping the tree-trunk with one arm and an overhanging branch with one upraised hand. The exaggerations of such a pose seem to have been carried over as a convention in some later examples even when the figures stand erect and all reason for the exaggeration has disappeared. At the bottom of this panel, to the right, is a mutilated small figure, almost a repetition of the larger one but in miniature. It is clinging to the tendril, so it too may be a tree spirit.

It is a pity that the figure has been damaged but it is fortunate that enough of it remains to convince the observer of the loveliness of the original. Of what was the head, only the earrings are now visible, but one can still see evidences of its confident pose. The body is nude except for the elaborate jewelry, which with its long skirt-like pendants, belt, et cetera, seems adequate to clothe this woodland sprite.

Lent by The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio



19 SEATED FIGURE OF THE GODDESS DEVI, OR KALI, THE OGRESS.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, XIVTH CENTURY A. D. 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN. H. BRONZE.

Kali, the most ferocious and destructive of all the deities in the Hindu pantheon is feared but greatly venerated. Her attribute-color is black, and in Hindu mythology black represents the formless unconditioned state before creation. The physical aspect of Hindu mythology is that all the colors are absorbed in black; so, all the elements are in the end absorbed by Kali. And, again, as the absence of all colors is black so Kali is without substance, and personified by a depressing or pessimistic goddess, as in this instance. In this figure, even the sculptor's very evident feeling for the decorative possibilities of his subject could not entirely counteract the sinister nature of the goddess.

Known as the Ender of Time, Kali dissolves all worlds, at the end of a cosmic cycle, and destroys all, reducing nature, earthly and heavenly ones to the unconditioned state, as in the beginning.

This bronze casting shows Kali, with what are thought to be cymbals in her hands, seated on a throne, within a circle. As the Destroyer, the Goddess of Death, who demands human sacrifice on her altars, she is shown grim and gaunt, with her characteristically big mouth, matted locks and emaciated body. It is to be noticed that she is not bedecked with the sumptuous ornaments which appear on so many of the other deities. She has, however, a simple necklace, armlets and bracelets. The torso is bare but around her waist is a tight-fitting garment with a knot at one side like the twisted fold of a *sari*. Portions of the bronze have acquired a brilliant green patina. One of the aspects of the Goddess Kali is, according to Hinduism, the idea that she is the feminine energy of Siva, the Great God, and his consort—therefore, one with him in symbolizing Time and Dissolution.

In comparing this statue with the more numerous representations of Kali which portray her as a violently blood-thirsty, repulsive ogress, we find that the sculptor of this piece showed considerable restraint. Yet the gaunt body, the semblance of a diabolical grin, the hollow abdomen, the protruding ribs, all intimate her insatiable hunger and thirst for sacrifice. One should take note, however, that even in her most terrible form Kali is also looked upon as a dispeller of fear, since the death and destruction which she brings only open the portals to other worlds and other existences.

Though comparatively small this casting is, nevertheless, heavy, the figure being solid bronze. The pedestal, however, is hollow. The holes in the base are for a practical purpose, being used as orifices through which poles may be intruded so that the temple attendants may carry the idol on their shoulders in processions.

The characterization of this deity is well presented by the artisan, and though it is not a pleasing subject it is, nevertheless, a very fine example of this type of temple sculpture from India.

Lent by the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri



20 VISHNU SEATED UNDER THE HALO OF A FIVE-HEADED NAGA.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, XVTH CENTURY A.D. 52 IN. H. GREY STONE.

Seated in the pose of royal ease, with the right leg pendant, this four-armed Hindu deity, who personifies preserving power, carries the various attributes by which he is known. In his upper left hand is the conch shell, the vibrations of which, when blown, energize creation; in the upper right hand is the discus which, with its radiating lines, recalls the rays of the sun, which this deity governs in mid-heaven. His lower right arm is resting on his knee, completing, with the raised knee, the so-called pose of royal ease; his lower right hand is raised, palm out, indicating the "Fear not!" *mudra*. Though this deity may be ferociously destructive in certain of his manifestations, he may also be benign, and, as in this instance, present the fear-dispelling sign. His destructive tendencies, however, are corollaries of preservation because according to the Hindus nothing can be actually destroyed, things are only changed, not annihilated. Sometimes

called the universal god, he includes in his rights all cosmic conditions in heaven, on earth and in the sea. He is arrayed in sumptuous jewelry: necklaces, elaborate earrings, armlets, bracelets, and anklets. For clothing, he has on a gossamer *dhoti*, or nether garment, with curved, flowing stripes signifying the richness of the cloth. In every particular he is richly dressed. The belt, that holds the *dhoti* around the waist, has a beautiful, decorative center ornament; the earrings are especially rich, being heavy and pendant, reaching well down over the shoulders. The halo, formed by seven cobras, five-headed, is highly decorative and artistic. The form of the snakes creates a graceful curve, and the spread of the cobra-hood makes a naturally shaped halo. On the lower members of the three-tiered base appears the single tail of the five-headed cobra which appears above.

This imposing panel was part of a Hindu temple, perhaps one of the two panels located at the two sides of an entrance. It is from southern India where the temples are profusely covered with architectural ornament, not only on the facade but on all four exteriors, as well as on the walls of the interior. From the point of view of sculptural effect, and skill in the use of chisel and mallet, this example is outstanding. The spotted grey granite is light in tone but because of that the lovely contours can more readily be seen. It is a strange figure, with four arms, and in a pose which would be difficult, if not impossible, for us, and yet its grace and simple naturalness are at once appealing. It is sculpture that depends upon conventions to make it acceptable to its religious devotees and yet it transcends imposed conventions and enters the realm of universal sculptural art.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



21 STANDING FIGURE OF THE HINDU GODDESS PARVATI, OR UMA.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, XVTH CENTURY A.D. 40 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. BRONZE.

This charming representation of the Daughter of the Himalayas, standing with her weight on one foot and the right hip elevated, and with the other leg put forward and slightly bent at the knee line, is the typical form of this deity seen in South Indian bronzes. She is standing in the swaying pose known as the *abhanga sthana*. Parvati symbolizes feminine energy and is directly associated with the great god Siva as his consort, and is also referred to as the Earth Mother —of great spirituality and purity. The inaccessible peaks of the great Himalayas are the mythological home of Siva, who, in his benign moments, has the companionship of this Daughter of the Himalayas. In the representation before us, she wears the mountainous crown, with four encircling ornamental panels; and below it, at the back, protrude ringlets of hair. The torso and arms are bare, as usual,

with the exception of the twice-born thread and the jewelry ornaments. The lower limbs are clothed in a clinging diaphanous material with an allover pattern of circles and stripes. Around her hips she wears an elaborate belt with pendants. She stands upon a lotus pedestal which in turn is mounted on a square base having four rings by means of which the statue might be supported or secured when carried in religious processions. The medium is cast bronze, which has acquired a green patina almost like that of an old Chinese bronze.

To the eyes of the Occidental observer the posture which the image-maker has deliberately given to this figure, including the exaggerated hip-line, the wasp-like waist, the straight left arm and the set positions of the fingers of the right hand, may seem exaggerated; but it must be remembered that this figure is an icon, every detail of which has a religious and traditional reason for existence. When one becomes familiar with the use of these conventions one begins to accept them as readily as some of the equally curious religious conventions of our own primitive and mediaeval religious art; and when these norms of convention are recognized, East Indian figures not only become more understandable but really seem more important in our general consideration of art. This may not be sculpture at its best but it is sculpture which can be placed on equal footing with much which, as students, we are taught in our Occidental training to admire. The posture, though somewhat exaggerated, is graceful. The balance of the whole is well conceived. The rounded curves of the body are feminine. The seemingly affected use of the fingers of the right hand is wholly conventional; that is, the imager had to conform to the *mudra*, or mystical gesture, prescribed by Hindu mythology or canonization. All the human feminine traits are either present in this figure, or were at least understood by the sculptor, without interfering with super-human characteristics which, in the depiction of deities such as this one, are so necessarily a part of Hindu sculpture.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



22 DANCING SIVA, FOUR ARMED, STANDING ON A DWARF-DEVIL.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, ABOUT XVTH CENTURY A.D. $38\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. BRONZE.

Siva, when shown in this dancing pose, is known as Nataraja, symbolizing the idea of vibration which, according to Hindu philosophy, is the source of creation. This dance, known as the Nadanta, generally shows Siva dancing within an arch of radiance, a circular ring surrounding the figure, with jets of flame coming from it at regular intervals. In this case it is obvious that the figure once had the arch of radiance, because the pedestal itself has two broken contact points whereby the arch is ordinarily attached.

This so-called Universal Lord, or Great God, of the Hindus, symbolizing the beating pulse of the soul of the universe, has four arms, indicating in one way the super-human character of the deity. In the upper right hand is held the drum, the symbol of the life principle of vibration. The lower right hand is raised, with

the palm turned outward and fingers extended in the form known as the *abhaya mudra*, or the gesture of "Fear not!" The upper left hand holds a flame, symbolizing the fire of sacrifice. The left arm extends across the body, with the hand pointing downward to the upraised foot, a gesture signifying blissful refuge. The torso and limbs are nude except for simple clothing and decorative ornaments.

Although Siva may be a fierce god of destruction, in the instance before us the deity appears in his benign form, dancing joyously, trampling the devil-dwarf, or Evil, underfoot. It is contended that this Universal Lord completes the circle of cosmic existence, including creation, preservation, destruction, incarnation and release from life, or salvation. He is, therefore, the foremost god in the Hindu pantheon.

South Indian bronze statues may be carried in great temple processions which take place upon the religious festival days of the devotees who worship at the shrines of Siva. Two rings at the ends of the oval pedestal and holes through its base are the means by which the deity was safely transported in the processions.

The craftsman who conceived this statue has presented the salient attributes of Siva Nataraja, having, as was the general custom, a devotional formula which guided him in conveying the impression that the statue was to make in the mind of the worshipper.

One such formula from the records of a South Indian temple has been translated into English by a native critic. It adequately but broadly suggests the qualifications of the image and indirectly embodies admonitions to the image-maker in the following words: "O Lord of the Dance, who calls by beat of drum all those who are absorbed in worldly things, and dispels the fear of the humble and comforts them with His love divine; who points with His uplifted Lotus foot as the refuge of Salvation; who carries the fire of sacrifice and dances in the Hall of the Universe, do Thou protect us!"

The craftsman has also infused into this cast bronze a delightful sense of rhythm. The four arms and the raised foot aid greatly in carrying forward the impression of abandonment in dance but with a dignity that well fits the exalted position of the Universal Lord.

Lent by C. T. Loo, Paris and New York City



23 STATUETTE OF A STANDING HINDU GODDESS, PARVATI.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, ABOUT 1500 A.D. 24 IN. H. BRONZE.

Parvati, a female deity, is, in the Hindu pantheon, the exact counterpart of the male deity Siva, but represents the female energy of the major god, who is himself sexless yet encompasses both male and female principles—that is, androgynous. She is sometimes referred to as the Mountaineer, the Daughter of the Snows, whose birth-place was among the high, mysterious peaks of the Himalayas, the abode of Siva. She it was who “once in spring-time, when the snows melt and the mountainside begins to blossom, drew by her prayers the Great God (Siva) from meditation in His icy cell” in the snowy Himalayan peaks, and became his bride. When shown with the crown headpiece, she is then the wife of Siva. She represents the Universal Mother and yet is more particularly the personification of a young maiden, pure and spiritual, with grace and beauty. In this statuette she stands in the swaying pose (*samabhanga*), that is, the hip raised and one foot forward, one of her arms hanging down at her side to accent

the sway and the other raised, with a blossom of the blue lotus in her hand. Figures of Parvati which follow this type ordinarily hold in the uplifted hand a budding blossom of the blue lotus, the flower of Siva, or hold the fingers in such a position that an actual lotus blossom might be placed there by the priest each day. The garments of this statuette are thin and cling to the body like wet drapery, a characteristic of the sculptural technique of the period. The decorative design on the garment is a scroll, or ogee, with a floral motif in each of the circular turns, creating a surface pattern which adds to and lightens the effect of the whole. The upper portion of the body is undraped but covered with sumptuous and elaborate jewelry which takes the place of clothing. Around the neck is a broad bejewelled necklace to which seems to be fastened a chain which meets between the breasts, terminating below in an ornament, whence it spreads over the hips and returns up the back to the necklace again. Around her hips is a three-banded belt with a fine center ornament which holds the *sari*, skilfully draped over the hip and limbs. From the belt hang ornamental panels, probably of metal like the belt. Her upper arms are adorned with jewelry and around her wrists and ankles are spirals of what might represent heavy gold wire.

She stands on a lotus pedestal, the top of which is the pod of the lotus surrounded by a row of upturned petals; upholding this is a series of larger inverted petals, the whole forming a double stand in effect but in reality completing the stand as a single lotus motif. This is the traditional lotus pedestal used throughout the Orient, but more particularly and universally used as a base for Buddhist figures. Under the lotus pedestal is a throne-like base on which four rings have been cast for convenience in safely carrying the goddess while being transported in religious processions.

Lent by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



24 A JAIN HOUSEHOLD SHRINE OF WOOD ELABORATELY CARVED.
MEDIAEVAL PERIOD, ABOUT 1700 A.D. 65 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN. H. WOOD.

The part of this shrine which has been preserved is what might be called the porch, the shrine proper having been back of the two sliding doors so interestingly carved with four- and six-petal flowers cut in a running ogee pattern. The complexity of the carved decoration, which completely covers the little shrine, presents a study problem for the iconographist. Real and mythological animals, real and mythological figures, deities, and tree and flower motifs in intricate exposition cover the entire surface. Every detail shows a mastery of the wood-carver's knife and it was no doubt an expensive accessory in the home of some very wealthy Jain.

From an architectural point of view the shrine is interesting because it not only shows the lintel and corbel construction of Hindu architecture, but also shows the dome with the placement of corner members over a rectangular opening to create a support for the circular dome. It defines very well, in a small way, the typical architecture of India; that is, the horizontal lintel type, with all the downward thrust carried on vertical columns. It also shows the ingenious way in which the Hindu elaborated the columns, with overhanging corbels and

non-loadbearing ornament. Its elaborateness is a bit startling, if not confusing, but it has a consistency in this elaboration that expresses a form of unity. The carver had a comparatively easy medium in which to work—wood; but as a matter of fact the same kind of elaboration may be seen on many an East Indian temple of stone. It is not at all unusual for the East Indian craftsman to express in wood or stone an unlimited amount of detail, which to him represents the acquisition of merit and is in keeping with the typical kind of architectural ornament which has prevailed in India for centuries.

The plain wooden flooring upon which the columns rest forms the floor of what in a full-size temple would be the porch. On the base below it, however, the complex carving continues, but differing from the main part of the shrine in that here no figures appear, the design being strictly floral. At the center of the front panel one small portion opens inward on hinges, door-like; no doubt the ritual equipment was kept within.

The sculptural detail suggests the work of a Jain craftsman; and the shrine was, no doubt, made to order for the home of a Jain. In India the Jains are an independent group who call themselves Hindus but have a religious philosophy of their own, as well as their own type of temple. As a rule these temples are elaborately decorated; they are often of the finest material, white marble, the carving of which is executed with the kind of minute detail that one thinks of in connection with such craftsmen as the ivory-carvers. When sculptors work with detail of this character it naturally follows that figure sculpture suffers and nothing is produced in a big sculptural way; and such is the case in the famous examples of Jain work in India. At the same time in the execution of geometric ornament, foliation and similar patterns, the Jain sculptors excelled.

In the little shrine before us we have a typical exposition of the meticulous workmanship of the Jain craftsman in India.

Lent by D. G. Kelekian, New York City

